SALTY · SCANS

Chapter 50

I'm Stanning the Prince



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APPARENTLY, THIS VILLA IS WHERE PRINCE RAYBURN USED TO STAY OFTEN.

CHATTER

IF WE'RE LUCKY, MAYBE WE'LL EVEN SEE PRINCESS HOYA HERE.

CHATTER

EVERYONE, QUIET DOWN!

WHERE ON EARTH...

AAAGH!

KYAAA!

THEIR FIRST FAN EVENT (CHAOTIC)

...DID ALL THESE FANS COME FROM?!

UH OH... I HAVE TO GO TO THE UNDERGROUND VILLAGE SO I CAN BOARD THE SUPPLY WAGON LIKE PRINCESS HOYA ASKED ME TO.

WHOOSH

BUT IS IT OKAY

BUT IS IT OKAY FOR ME TO JUST TAKE OFF LIKE THIS? I'M THE REASON WHY THIS COMMOTION HAPPENED IN THE FIRST PLACE.

ANGELA! NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THINGS OVER HERE.

I'LL KEEP THE FANS UNDER CONTROL.



STEP



LET'S GO.

FLUTTER

I SENT MISS ANGELA OUT THROUGH THE BACK JUST AS YOU ASKED.

FLUTTER

WE ALL HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO LEAVE IN A RUSH BECAUSE OF THE SUDDEN COMMOTION.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH SOMEONE EXPOSED THE LOCATION OF THIS VILLA ON PURPOSE TO DRIVE US OUT OF THE CENTRAL PARTS.

SINCE THE COMMOTION BROKE OUT DURING HIS MAJESTY'S RETURN CEREMONY...

...IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE ORDERS AN INVESTIGATION ON THE BOOK THAT CAUSED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. SO PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

ARE YOU RETURNING TO YOUR TERRITORY NOW?

LET ME ESCORT YOU TO THE OUTSKIRTS BEFORE I LEAVE TO JOIN MISS ANGELA.

I NEVER ASKED YOU TO ESCORT ME.

...

THERE'S NO NEED.

STAB

IT'S JUST THAT I HAVEN'T GOTTEN A CHANCE TO SPEAK WITH YOU SINCE I CAME TO THE CENTRAL PARTS.

I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU-

STEP

STEP

PRINCESS HOYA...!

SHING

HEY, SHE'S JUST AN ORDINARY CIVILIAN.

DON'T ACT LIKE FREDERIC'S BODYGUARD, YOU IDIOT.

SMACK

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

SHEATHE

GO ON.

YES, YOUR HIGHNESS.

BOW

WE CAME TO SEE YOU BECAUSE WE THOUGHT YOU'D BE THE ONLY ONE WHO WOULD CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM LOWLY SUBJECTS LIKE US.

WE'VE WORKED HARD TO GATHER SUPPLIES FOR OUR BELOVED RAY... I MEAN, PRINCE RAYBURN.

PRINCE

IF YOU ARE TO ATTEND THE SUPPLY SHIP MEETING, WE ASK THAT YOU PERMIT THE BOARDING OF THESE SUPPLIES AS WELL.

THIS WAGON...

...ALSO CONTAINS GIFTS FOR OUR FAMILY MEMBERS WHO HAVE EMBARKED ON THE EXPEDITION-

NOT YOU. MANO. WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANTED TO SAY TO ME?

GLUM

OH.

UMM...

WHISPER

PLEASE DON'T TRUST YOUR NEW SHADOW TOO MUCH.

SHADOWS ONLY DEVOTE THEIR SWORD...

...TO ONE MASTER IN THEIR LIFETIME.

IS THAT WHY YOU'RE LECTURING ME RIGHT NOW...

!

...AND LEAVING THE SCHOLAR ALL BY HERSELF? AND YOU CALL YOURSELF RAYBURN'S SHADOW?

^^

OH!! I, I APOLOGIZE!! I DIDN'T MEAN TO OVERSTEP MY BOUNDS!!!

WHACK

HAHA! MAYBE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS AN ESCORT.

PARDON?! NO, I DON'T NEED ONE!

I'LL BE BACK WITH DUKE ESPELINDO, YOUR HIGHNESS!

WAVE

STEP

STEP

HE'S SO ABSENT-MINDED.

NOW,

ABOUT YOUR WAGON.

GLANCE

CAN YOU GRAB IT AND FOLLOW ME TO


THE CASTLE?
!

YES!
OF COURSE!
THANK YOU!

IS THAT A PRINCE STAN?!

KYAA

IT'D BE A WASTE...



...TO RUIN OUR NEWLY-IMPROVED REPUTATION, RAYBURN.

PRINCESS HOYA.
I HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE YOU...



I AT LEAST WANTED TO WRAP UP MY DUTIES BEFORE I LEFT.

I'M TRULY GRATEFUL THAT YOU BROUGHT ME TO PRINCE RAYBURN.



MISS SCHOLAR. I'D LIKE YOUR ADVICE ON SOMETHING.

HOW DID YOU FIT IN SO WELL AT THE PALACE?

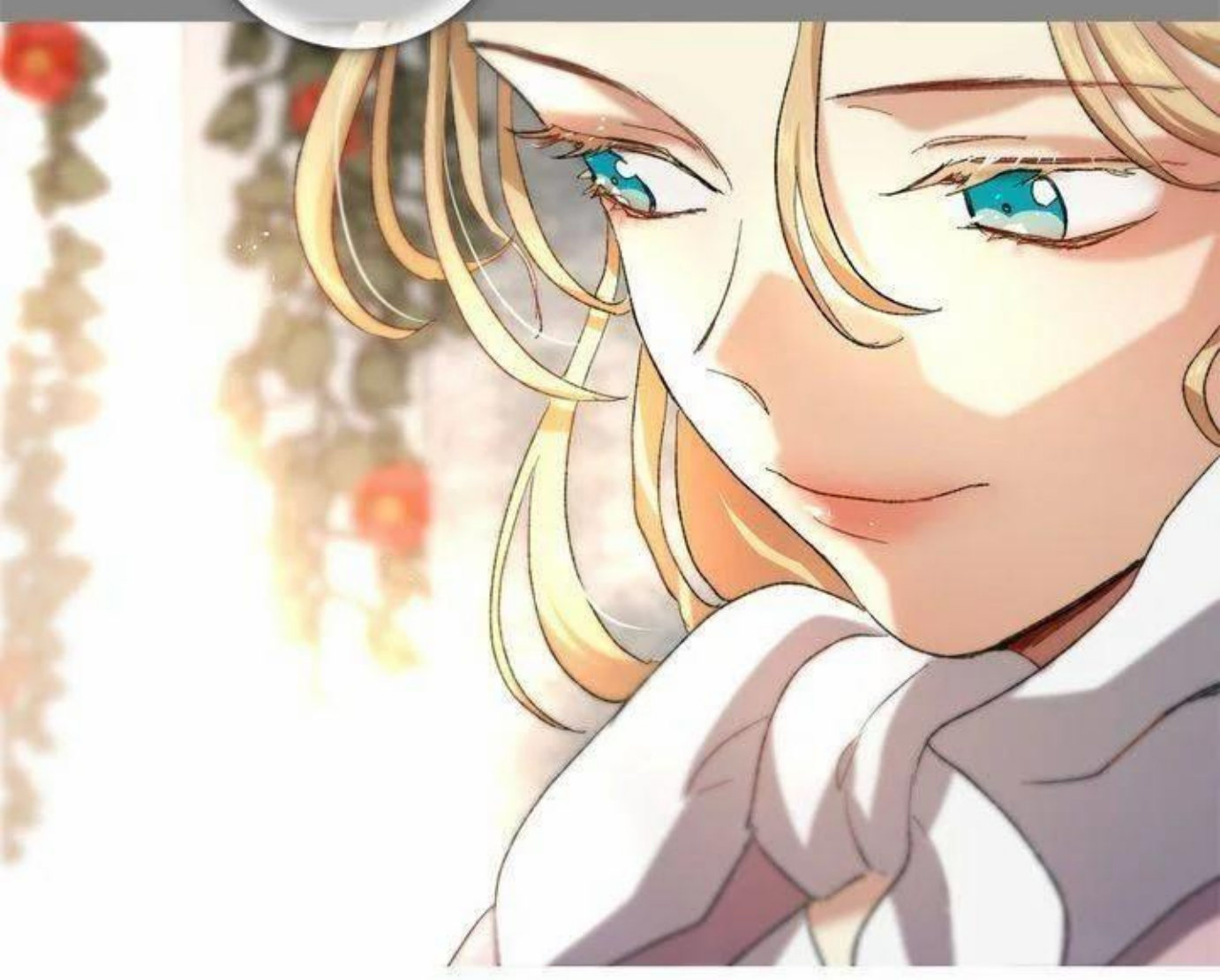


...I CAN'T TELL HER I CHATTED WITH EVERYONE AND OFFERED THEM ADVICE.



...

PONDER



BY OPENING UP...

...AND HAVING GENUINE CONVERSATIONS?

I APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THE COMMOTION ON THE STREETS...

...DURING YOUR RETURN CEREMONY, YOUR MAJESTY.

CLIP CLOP

I SHALL INVESTIGATE WHAT HAPPENED OUTSIDE THE PALACE WALLS, JUST AS YOU REQUESTED.

GOODNESS, PRINCESS HOYA.

OH. THERE ARE FLOWER PETALS ON YOUR CROWN AS WELL...

ALSO, WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO ADJUST THE SCHEDULE IN TIME FOR YOUR RETURN...

...SO THE SUPPLY SHIP MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE SOON...

BUT IF NEED BE, WE CAN IMMEDIATELY APPROVE THE SHIP FOR DEPARTURE-

THE SUPPLIES ARE FOR THE CROWN PRINCE.

FWIP

AND WE


WON'T ARRIVE AT
ANY GOOD RESULTS
WITHOUT A PROPER
DISCUSSION.

LET'S GET MOVING.

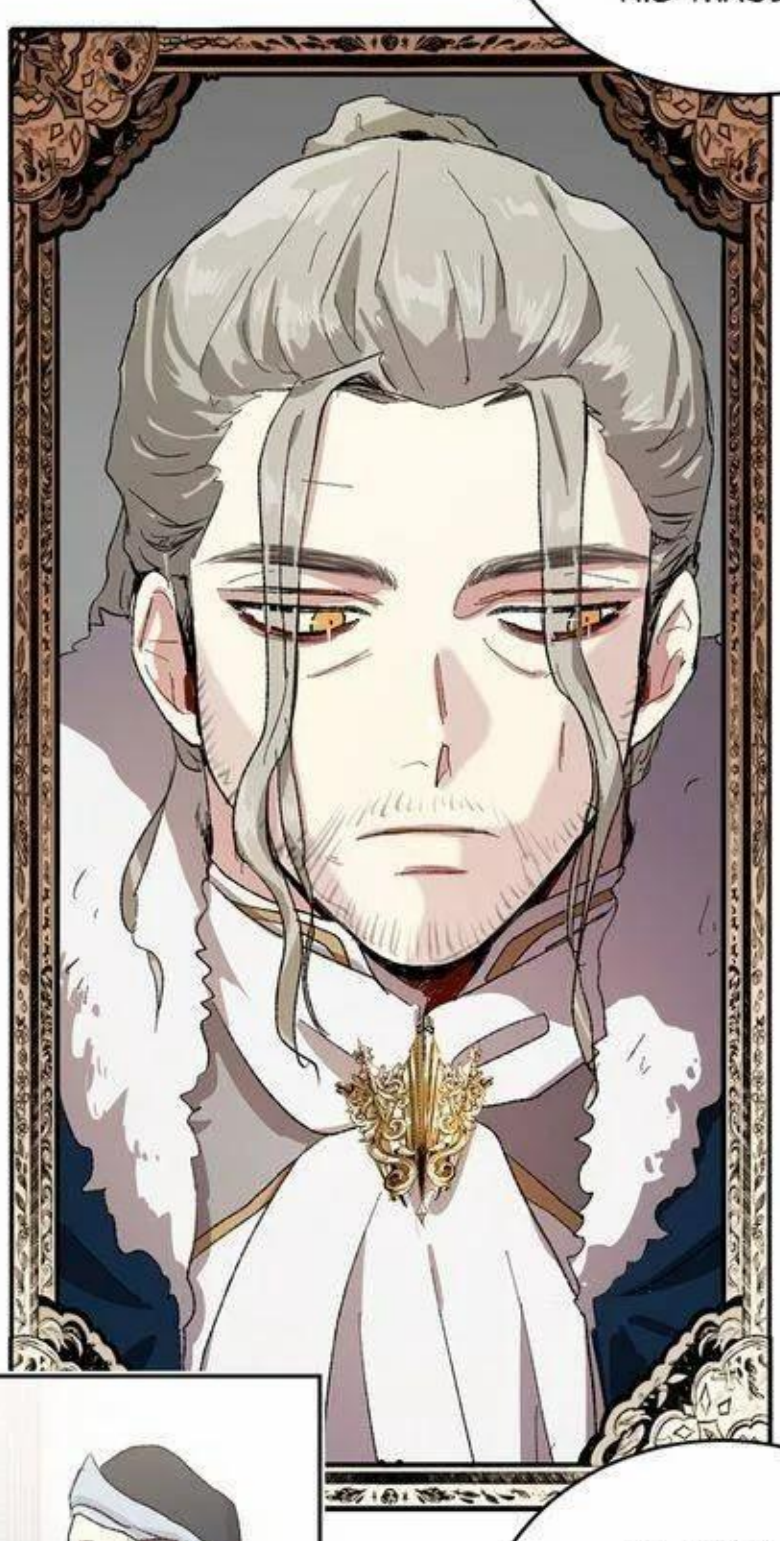
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!! YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT...!



WHISPER

WHISPER

YOU RASCALS! WHY WAS THERE SUCH A RUCKUS IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MAJESTY?



ACK...

W, WELL... WE TRIED TO RESTRAIN THE CROWD, SINCE HIS MAJESTY IS HERE...

...BUT PRINCESS HOYA IS CURRENTLY ON HER WAY TO THE PALACE.



AND SHE'S BEING ACCOMPANIED BY THE EMPIRE'S SUBJECTS, SO I'M AFRAID WE CAN'T TURN HER AWAY...

WOW.
WHAT IS ALL THIS?

KYAA

GOSH!
I DIDN'T KNOW A PLACE LIKE THIS EXISTED!

I MEAN,

I'LL BE SURE TO KEEP THE FANS UNDER CONTROL!

I'M GRATEFUL THAT EVERYONE LOVES THE NOVEL, BUT STILL... GOOD LUCK, RIDGE!

BUSTLE

BUSTLE

-FINAL SPURT OF FANGIRLING BEFORE THE EMPEROR'S CRACKDOWN-

LET'S DO LOTS OF FANGIRLING ONCE YOU GET BACK FROM YOUR BUSINESS TRIP!

HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY, ANGELA!

HUG

ACK! THANKS, RIDGE.

(LIED THAT SHE WAS GOING ON A BUSINESS TRIP)

ATTENTION,

EVERYONE!!

TH, THAT'S MY GIRL!

STEP

I ACTUALLY HAVEN'T DECIDED WHETHER I WANT TO GO LIVE IN THE NORTH OR JOIN THE EXPEDITION...

EITHER OPTION MIGHT BE A SELFISH THING FOR ME TO DO...

(Writing) Beginners' Class Selling Prince Goods

I'll write the sequel that never came out! (?)

!

DO YOU THINK I CAN GET MY HANDS ON A PLUSH WITH THIS?

DON'T FORGET ABOUT MY FLOWERS!

DIDN'T I SEE THOSE KIDS ON THE STREET THE OTHER DAY?

I GUESS THEY STILL LIKE PRINCE RAYBURN, EVEN AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM.

YEAH.
JUST WAIT A
LITTLE LONGER,
EVERYONE.

ONE DAY,
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO
STAN PRINCE RAYBURN IN
BROAD DAYLIGHT OUTSIDE
THE UNDERGROUND
VILLAGE.

THIS IS THE PLACE
WHERE I WAS ALMOST
ASSASSINATED.

BUT THANKS TO
THE PRINCE...

WOBBLE

BE CAREFUL.

SQUEEZE

...OUR FAN DATE LEFT A STRONGER IMPRESSION IN MY HEAD...

LET'S GO AROUND THE CURB AGAIN, PRINCE RAYBURN.

WHAT...?

...THAN THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT.

SMILE

I'M GETTING CLOSER TO SEEING HIM AGAIN.

FOR NOW, I'D BETTER HELP GET THE SUPPLY WAGON ON BOARD.

STEP

STEP

IF IT'S THE PLACE WHERE THE ILLEGAL TRADING GOES ON, I BET IT'S WHERE THE KNIGHTS NEGOTIATED WITH THE BANDITS LAST TIME.

THE PLACE WHERE THE BIRDS ARE MAKING A FUSS.

I Stan the Prince

Art & Story by
zoo sun

50

IT'S NOT FAIR.
I WASN'T TRYING TO
LECTURE HER.

...I SHOULD
STOP THINKING
ABOUT THIS.

I'M IN THE SLUM
NEAR THE PORTS.
THIS IS THE WAY TO
THE UNDERGROUND
VILLAGE, RIGHT?

CREAK

...IT SEEMS LIKE
THIS FLOOR COULD
COLLAPSE AT ANY
MOMENT.

CREAK

ONCE WE BOARD
THE WAGON...

(PLANNING WHAT TO DO)

SQUEAK SQUEAK

CONCLUSION

...I'D BETTER
KNOCK MISS ANGELA
UNCONSCIOUS!

I FEEL BAD,
BUT I SHOULD TAKE HER
TO THE NORTH AND JOIN THE
EXPEDITION ON MY OWN. EVEN
IF IT MEANS I HAVE TO CUT
TIES WITH HER.

IT'D BE BEST IF MISS ANGELA
NEVER FOUND OUT...

...THAT THE RED WE
HAVE TO SEE FOR THE
SAKE OF THE EMPIRE...

...ISN'T THE COLOR
OF FLOWER PETALS.

!

STEP

HALT

THOSE ARE THE
EMPEROR'S MEN.

STEP

HUFF

PUFF

AS IF THINGS WEREN'T DANGEROUS ENOUGH ALREADY. WHY DID YOU BRING ALL THOSE KNIGHTS WITH YOU?

ARE YOU TRYING TO ANNOUNCE OUR SECRET MEETING TO THE WORLD?

THIS PLACE IS FILLED WITH BEGGARS WHO HAVE NO WILL TO LIVE, LET ALONE ANY INTEREST IN THE EMPIRE.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHY AREN'T YOU DOING YOUR JOB PROPERLY?!

UGH. THIS PLACE REEKS...

I TIPPED YOU OFF ON THE LOCATION OF THE TWINS' VILLA SO YOU COULD DRIVE THE PRINCESS OUT OF THE CENTRAL PARTS,

NOT SO THAT THOSE LOWLY FOOLS COULD CAUSE A RUCKUS DURING HIS MAJESTY'S RETURN CEREMONY!

...SO IT WAS HIS DOING.


AS A RESULT, THE PRINCESS HAS RETURNED TO THE PALACE TO ATTEND THE SUPPLY SHIP MEETING!
WHAT?

IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S TRYING TO USE DUKE ESPELINDO AS A SHIELD AND THE EXPEDITION AS AN EXCUSE...

HUFF

...TO SHAMELESSLY REMAIN IN THE CENTRAL PARTS DESPITE HIS MAJESTY'S PRESENCE!

PUFF



WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU SCHWANDELLS DOING-

SO SHE THINKS SHE CAN JUST BARGE IN THERE...



...DESPITE THE FACT THAT WHAT SHE'S DOING IS UNPRECEDENTED.

WE WERE UNABLE TO APPROACH THE PRINCESS BECAUSE OF THE PAPARAZZI HIDING AROUND HER.



HOWEVER, I'M SURE THE COMMOTION CAUSED BY REVEALING THE LOCATION OF THE VILLA TO THOSE LOWLY SUBJECTS...

...IRRITATED HIS MAJESTY.



EVEN IF THE ESPELINDOS ARE STILL HERE, THEY'LL BE PRESSURED INTO LEAVING SOON.

I DON'T LIKE THESE BASTARDS.

LET'S END THE CHATTING HERE.

IT'S AS IF THEY RESPECT THE GRAND GENERAL FROM HOUSE SCHWANDELL MORE THAN HIS MAJESTY.

F, FINE. LET'S JUST DO OUR JOBS AND GET THIS OVER WITH.

...

STEP

STEP

SO WE'LL BE WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING DOWN HOUSE ESPELINDO.

ANY INFORMATION ON THE PRINCESS FROM VESS WHO VANISHED?

DID THEY SEPARATE FROM THE EXPEDITION BECAUSE OF PRINCESS GARNET?

NO.

SHE PROBABLY WENT INTO HIDING LIKE EVERYONE ELSE FROM VESS AS SOON AS THE DOCUMENT WAS DECIPHERED.





VERY WELL. THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF THE PERSON WHO IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE WRITTEN THE TREASONOUS BOOK.

SLIP

IT WAS SKETCHED ACCORDING TO GENERAL CHANCELLOR'S DESCRIPTION.

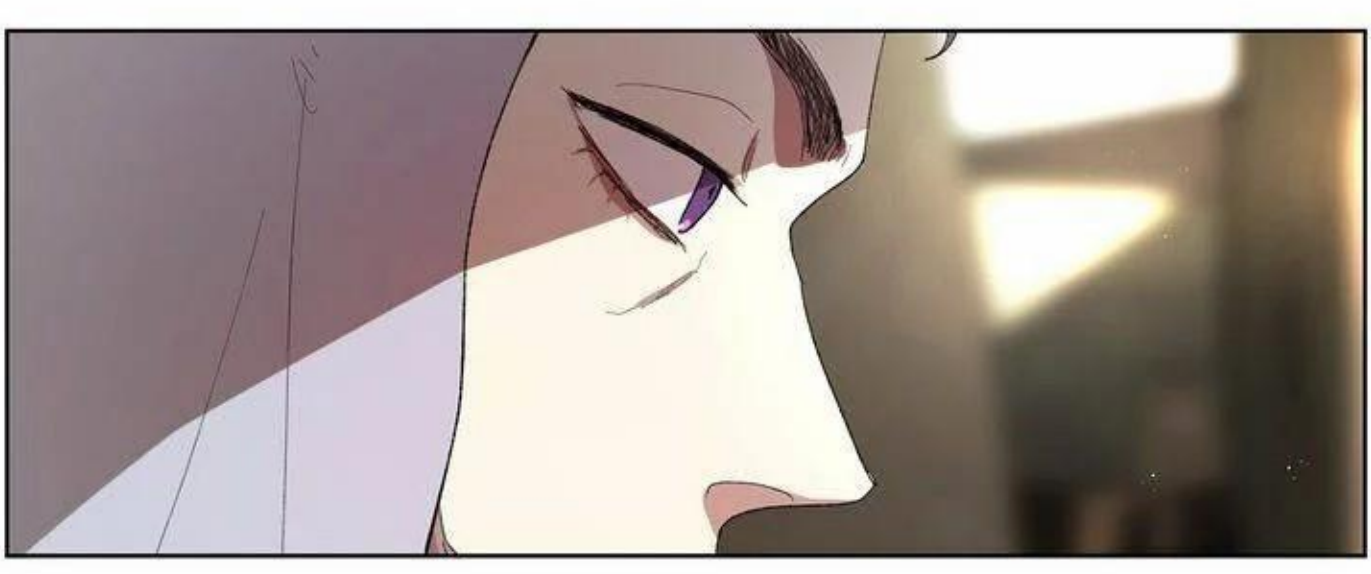
SHE RESEMBLES THE SCHOLAR FROM VESS WHO WAS BROUGHT HERE BY THE TWINS...



WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT? SCRAM, YOU LITTLE BEGGAR BRAT!



...SO THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN BY A CIVILIAN?



THIS DEFINITELY LOOKS LIKE THE GIRL WITH ANTENNA BANGS THAT I SPOTTED WITH PRINCESS HOYA BACK IN TOWN.

I'D BETTER CATCH THAT LOWLY WENCH ONCE AND FOR ALL.



BY THE TIME DUKE ESPELINDO RETURNS, HE'LL BARELY BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE HER!

HAHA!

OH, RIGHT. I OPENED UP THE SMUGGLING ROUTE JUST AS YOU ASKED.



WE NEVER MADE SUCH A REQUEST.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE GRAND GENERAL'S ONE-EYED KNIGHT CAME BY JUST LAST NIGHT.



?

SQUEAK!!

!




WHO GOES THERE?!


STAB
ACK. I WAS TOO FOCUSED ON THEIR CONVERSATION...
TAP
KICK
MAYBE I SHOULD GO REPORT THIS TO PRINCESS HOYA...


SCHWING





CLANG

KRAACK

ISN'T HE PRINCESS HOYA'S KNIGHT?

SPIN

GRAB

THWACK

...!

DASH

...HE'S SO FAST... DID PRINCESS HOYA ORDER HIM TO DO THIS?

WHAT IF...

THROB

CRUNCH

??

HUH...?

SLIP

CRUMBLE

IS THAT THE UNDERGROUND VILLAGE?

DID PRINCESS HOYA...

STRETCH

TUMBLE

URGH

...SEND HIM ALONG AS MY ESCORT??



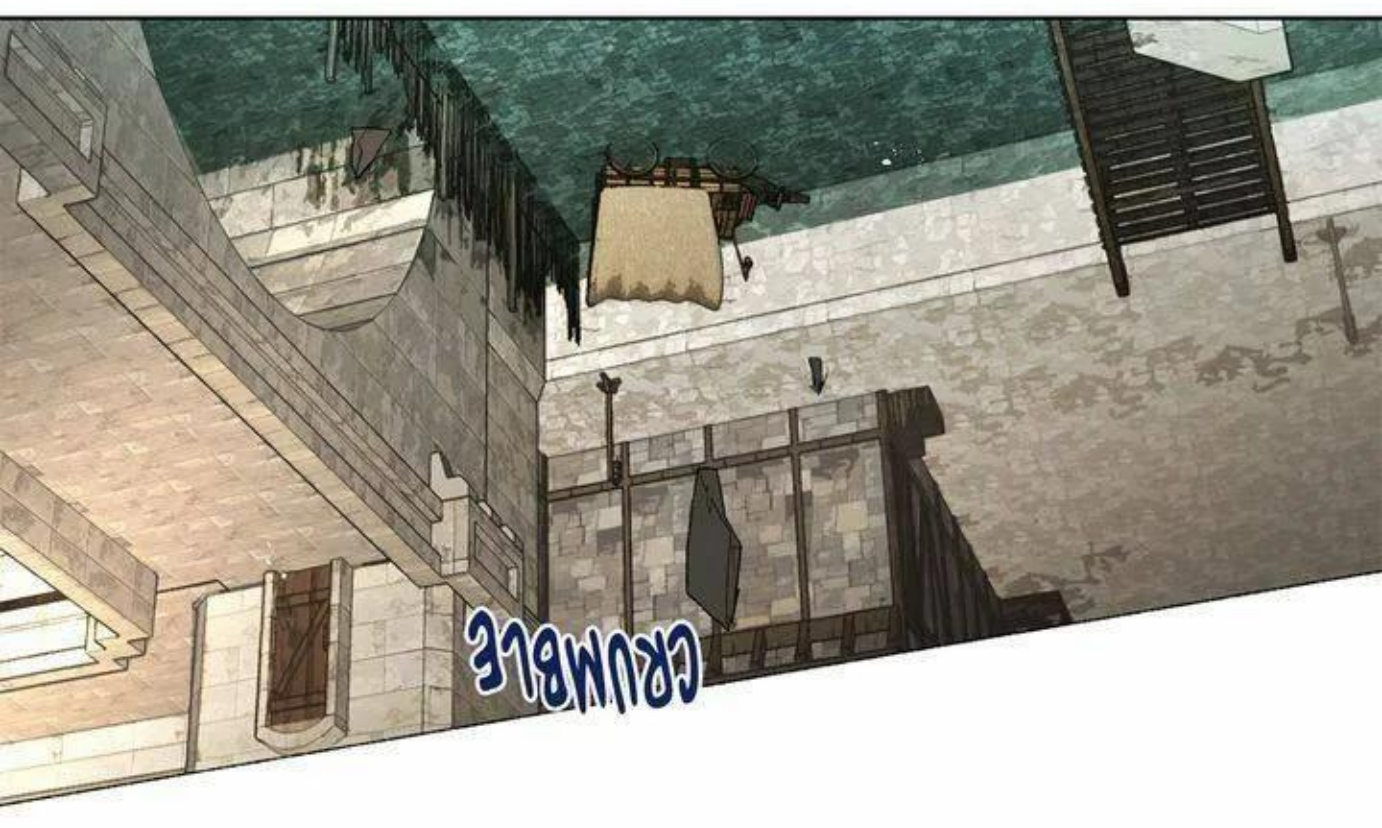
I WANT TO CHECK IF THAT WAGON IS HOUSE ESPELINDO'S... BUT WHAT IF IT ISN'T?

GO AWAY, YOU BANDITS!



ALL I DID WAS FOLLOW THE BIRDS HERE, BUT THEY LED ME TO A LUXURY WAGON!





I TOLD HER I DIDN'T NEED ONE!!

HONKKK

!

THAT'S THE SHIP.

LOOKS LIKE IT'LL DEPART SOON.

DANGLE

(?)

OH NO. I'M STARTING TO SEE THINGS NOW.

I NEED TO STOP IDLING!

THERE'S NO TIME FOR ME TO THINK.

HEY...

STEP

CRUNCH

TUMBLE

?!!

FWIP

SPLASH

DID THOSE PEOPLE GET INTO A FIGHT? WHY ARE THEY BEING SO ROUGH?

CRUMBLE

MURMUR

MURMUR

WHO ARE THEY?! DID THEY HEAR OUR CONVERSATION?

DASH

UGH... I DON'T EVEN WANT TO SET FOOT IN THAT DISGUSTING PLACE.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? IS THAT GUY MADE OF STEEL, OR ARE YOU JUST A BUNCH OF COWARDS?!

COME ON! GET DOWN THERE THIS INSTANT!

FALTER

IS THAT... ONE OF DUKE ESPELINDO'S DOGS? I SHOULD FINISH HIM OFF ONCE HE GETS BACK UP HERE...

IS IT JUST ME, OR IS THE ESCORT ACTING ON A PERSONAL GRUDGE...?

IN ONE PIECE

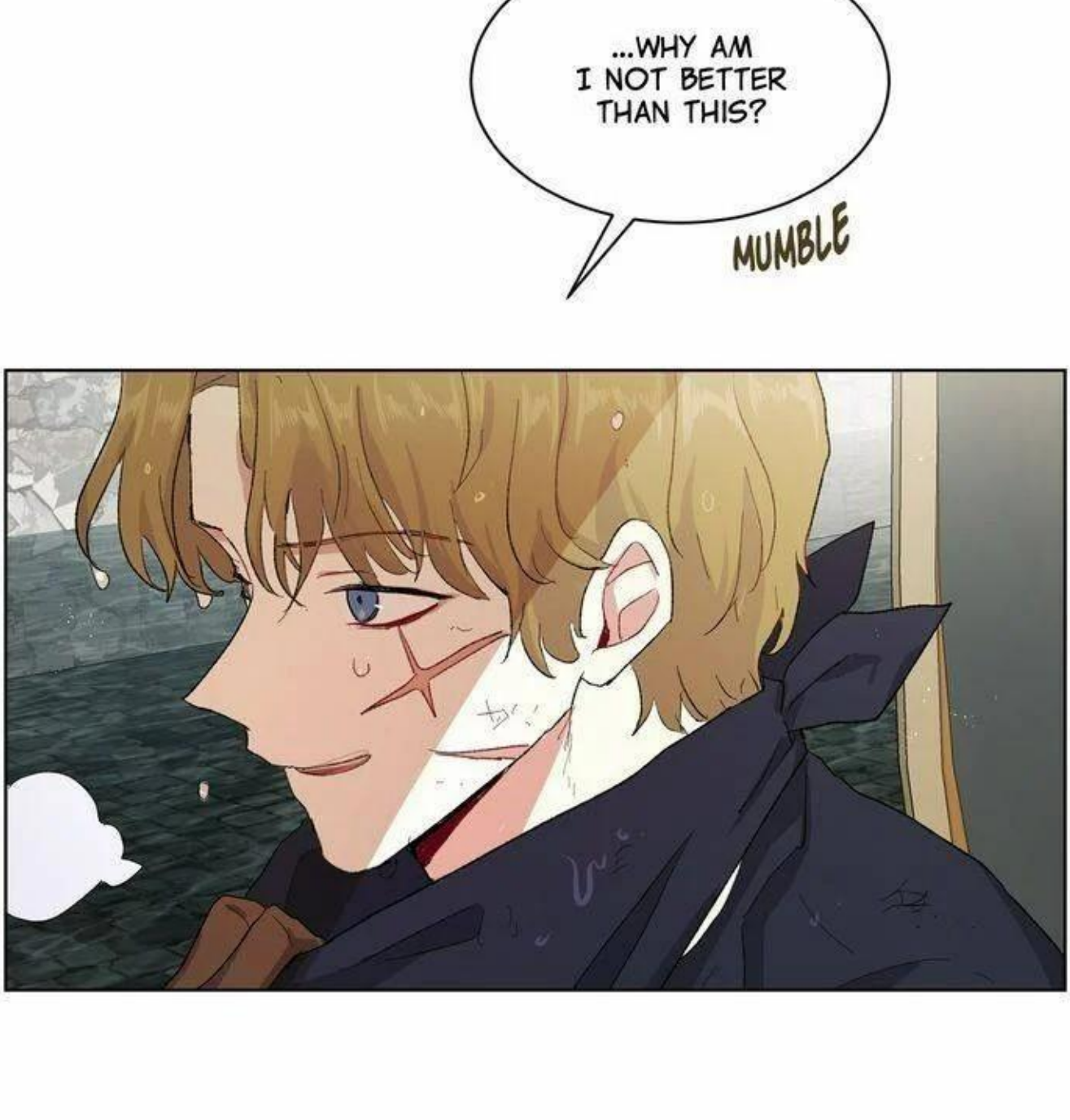
PRINCESS HOYA'S RIGHT. MISS ANGELA IS MY TOP PRIORITY AT THE MOMENT... SHE PROBABLY LOST HER WAY AROUND THE ENTRANCE.

ONCE I SHAKE OFF MY PURSUERS, I'LL GO LOOK FOR HER.



...WHY AM I NOT BETTER THAN THIS?

MUMBLE



SIR MANO!



?? MISS ANGELA?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

THAT WAS AMAZING! I SHOULD LEARN YOUR FALLING TECHNIQUE, TOO! I ENDED UP GETTING A NOSEBLEED WHEN I CHASED AFTER BLAN LAST TIME!

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY HERE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE BAD WITH DIRECTIONS...

(EXCITED)

FINDING THIS PLACE WAS A PIECE OF CAKE! ANYWAY, CHECK OUT THIS WAGON!

SPLASH

I WAS ABOUT TO CHASE AWAY THE BANDITS AND GUARD THE WAGON. BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU BEAT ME TO IT.

LOOKS LIKE I STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE I CAN CATCH UP TO YOU, SIR MANO. NO WONDER YOU'RE PRINCE RAYBURN'S BODYGUARD!

BEAM

THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS I WANT TO LEARN FROM YOU BESIDES HORSEBACK RIDING. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TEACH ME?

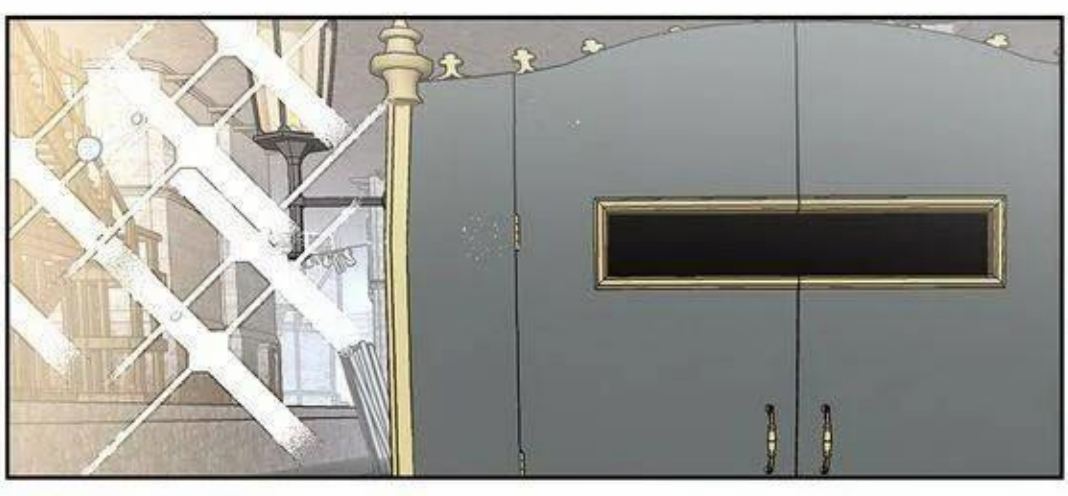
SNIFFLE

OH, DUKE ESPELINDO...



HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO LET SUCH A RADIANT FLOWER BE TAINTED WITH BLOOD?

(?)
IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT. I'D BETTER KNOCK HER OUT!



WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE OUT THERE? ARE THE BANDITS AROUND AGAIN?

I'M TOO SCARED TO TAKE A LOOK.

I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE EATEN THE FOOD SHE OFFERED ME...!



WHERE ON EARTH AM I? AND WHY DOES THE AIR STINK SO MUCH?

MISS ANGELA. PLEASE CHECK THE WAGON WHILE I COVER YOU. THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING INSIDE.

OKAY!

CLACK

?!



SWING

OH NO...!

!

FLAP

ACK...!
I GUESS IT
MUST'VE BEEN
THE BIRDS...


PRINCESS GARNET?

to be continued

MSTORYHUB

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